

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An exhaust gas purification apparatus ~~A regeneration device of an exhaust gas~~ comprising:

a casing; [[and]]

a honeycomb-like filter accommodated in the casing and ~~made of~~ comprising a porous silicon carbide sinter carrying an exhaust gas purification catalyst, the honeycomb-like filter being configured to remove particulates in an exhaust gas; and

a regeneration device configured to cause the honeycomb-like filter to be preheated with heat of the exhaust gas before regenerating the honeycomb-like filter.

Claims 2-3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a switch valve positioned downstream to the casing and configured to switch a flow of the exhaust gas, wherein the regeneration device comprises a first temperature detector configured to detect a temperature in the casing, a second temperature detector configured to detect a temperature of the exhaust gas, and a processor configured to make a comparison of the temperature in the casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, open the switch valve based on the comparison and preheat the honeycomb-like filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 5 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the switch valve comprises an electromagnetic valve.

Claim 6 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the first temperature detector comprises a thermocouple, the second temperature detector comprises a thermocouple, and the processor comprises a CPU, a RAM and a ROM.

Claim 7 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a heating device configured to heat the honeycomb-like filter to remove the particulates deposited in the honeycomb-like filter.

Claim 8 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the heating device comprises an electric heater.

Claim 9 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a first pressure sensor configured to detect a backpressure value of the exhaust gas upstream to the honeycomb-like filter and a second pressure sensor configured to detect a backpressure value of the exhaust gas downstream to the honeycomb-like filter, wherein the regeneration device is configured to calculate a pressure loss based on the backpressure value of the exhaust gas upstream to the honeycomb-like filter and the backpressure value of the exhaust gas downstream to the honeycomb-like filter and to detect an amount of the particulates deposited in the honeycomb-like filter.

Claim 10 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising switching means for switching a flow of the exhaust gas, wherein the regeneration device comprises first temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature in the casing, second temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature of the exhaust gas, and processing means for making a comparison of the temperature in the casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, operating the switching means based on the comparison and preheating the honeycomb-like filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 11 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising:

a second casing;

a second honeycomb-like filter accommodated in the second casing and comprising a porous silicon carbide sinter carrying an exhaust gas purification catalyst, the second honeycomb-like filter being configured to remove particulates in an exhaust gas;

a second switch valve positioned downstream to the second casing and configured to switch a flow of the exhaust gas,

wherein the regeneration device further comprises a third temperature detector configured to detect a temperature in the second casing, and the processor is configured to make a comparison of the temperature in the casing, the temperature in the second casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, open the second switch valve based on the comparison and preheat the second honeycomb-like filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 12 (new) An exhaust gas purification apparatus comprising:

a casing;

a filter accommodated in the casing and configured to remove particulates in an exhaust gas; and

a regeneration device configured to cause the filter to be preheated with heat of the exhaust gas before regenerating the filter.

Claim 13 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a switch valve positioned downstream to the casing and configured to switch a flow of the exhaust gas, wherein the regeneration device comprises a first temperature detector configured to detect a temperature in the casing, a second temperature detector configured to detect a temperature of the exhaust gas, and a processor configured to make a comparison of the temperature in the casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, open the switch valve based on the comparison and preheat the filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 14 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the switch valve comprises an electromagnetic valve.

Claim 15 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the first temperature detector comprises a thermocouple, the second temperature detector comprises a thermocouple, and the processor comprises a CPU, a RAM and a ROM.

Claim 16 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a heating device configured to heat the filter to remove the particulates deposited in the filter.

Claim 17 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the heating device comprises an electric heater.

Claim 18 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising a first pressure sensor configured to detect a backpressure value of the exhaust gas upstream to the filter and a second pressure sensor configured to detect a backpressure value of the exhaust gas downstream to the filter, wherein the regeneration device is configured to calculate a pressure loss based on the backpressure value of the exhaust gas upstream to the filter and the backpressure value of the exhaust gas downstream to the filter and to detect an amount of the particulates deposited in the filter.

Claim 19 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising switching means for switching a flow of the exhaust gas, wherein the regeneration device comprises first temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature in the casing, second temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature of the exhaust gas, and processing means for making a comparison of the temperature in the casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, operating the switching means based on the comparison and preheating the filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 20 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

a second casing;

a second filter accommodated in the second casing and configured to remove particulates in an exhaust gas;

a second switch valve positioned downstream to the second casing and configured to switch a flow of the exhaust gas,

wherein the regeneration device further comprises a third temperature detector configured to detect a temperature in the second casing, and the processor is configured to make a comparison of the temperature in the casing, the temperature in the second casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, open the second switch valve based on the comparison and preheat the second filter with the exhaust gas.

Claim 21 (new) An exhaust gas purification apparatus comprising:

a casing;

a filter accommodated in the casing and configured to remove particulates in an exhaust gas; and

regenerating means for regenerating the filter by heating the filter,

wherein the regenerating means preheats the filter with heat of the exhaust gas before regenerating the filter.

Claim 22 (new) The exhaust gas purification apparatus according to claim 21, wherein the regenerating means includes heating means for heating the filter to remove the particulates deposited in the filter, switching means for switching a flow of the exhaust gas, first temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature in the casing, second temperature detecting means for detecting a temperature of the exhaust gas, and processing means for making a comparison of the temperature in the casing and the temperature of the exhaust gas, operating the switching means based on the comparison and preheating the filter with the exhaust gas.